



Suburban Cities Association
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Good evening.

My name is Pete Lewis. I am the Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Suburban Cities Association and the Mayor of the City of Auburn.

I appreciate this opportunity to testify on the proposed amendments to the King County Charter on behalf of the Suburban Cities Association

The Suburban Cities Association provides information, education and advocacy on behalf of its 35 member cities. Collectively member cities represent approximately 785,000 King County residents or 53% of the population of incorporated King County.

SCA has been pleased to be invited to participate throughout the review process of the King County Charter. Newcastle Councilmember Sonny Putter and SCA Executive Director Karen Goroski have attended and participated in most meetings of the Commission as well as its Regional Governance Committee and work groups. They have been complimentary of the inclusive process of the Commission's work.

Early in 2007 SCA formed a work group to draft the SCA recommendations for amendments to the King County Charter. Those recommendations were vetted at our Public Issues Committee where an average of 25 cities coalesce on a monthly basis. The SCA Board of Directors acted on the work of the Public Issues Committee and on September 20th forwarded our recommendations to the Charter Review Commission. The issues of the suburban cities were grouped into four subject areas:

1. Annexation and Transition
2. Regional Committees
3. County Wide Special Purpose Districts
4. Good Government

Recognizing that the Commission had a limited amount of time to address a myriad of issues, we are pleased that so many of the issues of the suburban cities were included in the areas of "Good Government" and the "Regional Committees".

Although the Commission's proposed amendments to the Charter regarding the Regional Committees do not necessarily correspond to the original recommendations from SCA, we feel much progress was made and appreciate the efforts of all parties involved. Therefore, SCA wholeheartedly supports the recommended amendments for the Regional Committees.

Under the heading of "Good Government", SCA had recommended ***"that there be urban unincorporated transitional committees in the urban unincorporated areas. We felt that the Charter did not intend for there to be any kind of government structure in urban unincorporated areas."*** SCA feels that the compromise reached with the Office of the King County Executive and the County Council which has resulted in a proposed Charter amendment may address our concerns.

SCA had also recommended that ***"the charter review process should be amended so that the recommendations of the commission must be submitted to the voters as drafted by the commission. This new provision will strengthen the role of the Charter Review Commission. It will guarantee that the work of the commission will be reviewed by the voters."*** The proposed amendment to the Charter that would require the County Council to review and take action on all Charter Review Commission recommendations is a step in the right direction.

The Commission's proposed amendment on "Citizen Initiative" somewhat responds to SCA's recommendation that ***"citizens should be permitted to amend the charter through the citizen initiative process by means of a super majority vote. This option creates a more responsive government which allows the public to submit charter amendments to the voters through the initiative process."***

SCA appreciates the many, many hours that the volunteers committed to the Charter Review process. We believe the results were well worth the effort and will encourage the County Council to review and act on your recommendations as written.

Thank you.